Iron County Register.

By ELI D. AKE.

IRONTON. : : : MISSOURI.

WEEDING THEM OUT.

A Minister's Way of Getting at the Member Who Contributed an Unsigned Card.

"I smile over it even now," declared the well-known minister of the Gospel who was in a reminiscent mood, according to the Detroit Free Press. "It was my first church, and I was ambitious to make a good showing. We were sadly in need of a new church, and I decided to make an attempt to get one. The congregation was not a wealthy one, and I fully realized that it would be a difficult matter to secure the needed funds. Knowing that many are sensitive over the fact that they are not able to give as much as others, I tried the plan of having them write the amount they were willing to give upon a card and put it in a small envelope that I furnished.

"Well, I collected the envelopes and took them in my study to look over. The amount pledged was very satisfactory but there was one card calling for $100 that was unsigned. At first I thought this was an oversight, then thinking I recognized the writing I was not so sure. There was only one member who wrote a hand like it, and that was Deacon Jones, a man who had the reputation of being very close. Now $100 was none too much for him to give, although I had not expected to get more than $25 from him. I distinctly remembered seeing him make a great show of dropping his envelope in the hat when it was passed, and as there was no card with his name I felt sure that the unsigned card was his and that he was well aware that he had not signed it.

"Well, the next Sunday—remember I was young—I resolved upon a bold plan. I arose and requested all those who had handed in an envelope the Sunday before to stand up. This they did, the deacon among them. Then as I read a list of the givers I had made from the cards, I requested them to be seated. One by one they sat down, and when my list was exhausted only the deacon was standing, and he was pretty red in the face. I blandly explained matters, invited the deacon to sign his card, and after he had done so, much against his will, I announced the hymn: 'Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow.'"

TO WALK GRACEFULLY.

Much Depends Upon the Shoe a Woman Wears and the Care of Her Feet.

Grace of movement in walking is one of the rarest charms in woman, and no doubt the chief reason for the lack of grace lies in the footwear. Certainly no woman can walk gracefully or with a free and confident bearing if her whole body is thrown out of poise by a high French or "Cuban" heel. The woman is yet to be seen who can exhibit gracefulness while wearing exaggerated heels, says American Queen.

A thing to be borne in mind by the large woman, or she who has large, ungainly feet, is that she must wear comfortably fitted, laced or buttoned boots at all times if she wishes to appear easy in motion. She should never wear low shoes nor slippers.

The sole should be rather thick, but at the same time flexible, and the heel about an inch high (not more) and always even. Whenever a heel is worn off unevenly, have it straightened without delay if you wish to keep your feet and ankles strong, straight and shapely and your carriage graceful.

Another matter that is vital, perhaps not so much to grace as to health, is that of keeping the feet and ankles warmly clad whenever the weather is cold or damp. The time of greatest danger is in the fall when the first cold days and nights come. We have been wearing thin hosiery and perhaps low shoes all summer, and for some reason we feel loath to change with the weather. But we must, and promptly, too, if we wish to avoid taking cold or contracting some serious chronic trouble; so the first day that your ankles feel cold and you feel a desire to draw them up under your skirts for warmth, put on your boots, and when the weather gets colder still and perhaps snowy, don woolen stockings. It pays to keep the feet warm at all times; nothing pays better, physically.

Salsify Fritters.

This is a nice way to cook salsify. Scrape the oyster plant and drop it quickly into cold water to which you have added a few drops of onion juice to prevent its turning dark. Then boil soft in salted water and then mash fine. To every cup of the pulp add a beaten egg, a teaspoonful of melted butter, a tablespoonful of cream or rich milk and a heaping tablespoonful of flour, salt and pepper to taste. Drop by spoonfuls into very hot fat and fry a nice brown. Or you can keep the vegetable whole and, after cooking, dip in butter and fry, seasoning with salt and pepper after frying.—Washington Star.

Dried Pumpkin.

The best way to prepare pumpkin for winter use is to cut the pumpkin into long slender slices, put them in shallow pans and place them in the oven until they are as dry as a chip. After this, take the dried pumpkin to the mill and have it ground into meal of the same size as cornmeal. This will keep for an indefinite length of time, and can be used whenever needed, without the necessity of slicing and grating. Pumpkin meal prepared in this way will make up as palatably as the fresh pumpkin.—N. Y. Tribune

Orange Pudding.

Peel and slice a half dozen oranges, over which sift one cup of sugar. Boil one pint of milk and thicken with one tablespoon of dissolved cornstarch. Add the beaten yolks of three eggs just before removing from the stove. Pour this mixture over the oranges. Beat the whites of the eggs with a little sugar, for a meringue, and brown delicately.—Good Housekeeping.

TURNING A NEW LEAF

A NEW YEAR'S STORY

By MANDA L. CROCKER.

MRS. MARCIA BERRIE had been mistress of the Shelly Farms for only a few short months; but long enough, after all, for every one in the neighborhood to have an opinion of John Berrie's second wife.

She dressed finer than his first wife did—most second wives do—she spent more hours at the piano, and seemed several degrees more aristocratic than the first Mrs Berrie.

It was an honored custom, reaching back to the stouter branches of the ancestral tree, for the owner of the Farms to give a New Year's dinner to the countryside; and each guest was invited to come and "turn a new leaf for yearly luck."

Of course, it was the "firsts," and not the "seconds" or "thirds," as the shippers say, who enjoyed these annual feasts and, usually, they began several weeks before to plan "what to wear." This year it seemed a necessity to be a little more particular about the cut of gowns and

"How About Your Annual Dinner?"

width of trimmings, for the new Mrs. Berrie was a lady of means in her own right, and dressed elaborately.

"We must make an impression," said Mrs. Wilton, decisively, "and she must feel that our presence is an honor to the Farms. I intend to have a new silk; a regular dinner party dress."

And so the "firsts" planned to surpass all former efforts, for the sake of profound impression; therefore, by the middle of December a score of lovely new gowns were the pride of as many ambitious feminine owners.

The mistress of Shelly Farms was affable and gracious to all, and the tony "firsts" were just dying to display their rich costumes in her honor. But for some unaccountable reason the invitations were tardy.

Could it be possible that the second wife was one of those new women, who would, at one fell swoop, eliminate the annual dinner? And would John Berrie stand that?

In sheer desperation of suspense, Mrs. Goldwaite was delegated to call at the Farms, ostensibly to speak of a philanthropic movement, but really to scent the New Year festivities and overdue cards.

Mrs. Berrie received her visitor very courteously and pleasantly, and supported the philanthropic idea enthusiastically, even graciously accepting the presidency of the society when they should organize. But when the conversation drifted into holiday news the caller could not, by any tact, draw out the bride's plans concerning New Year's day. Exasperated, Mrs. Goldwaite suddenly let go skirmishing and asked her, point blank, "if the Farms would give annual dinner this year?"

"O, certainly," answered the new wife, her face lighting up with pleasure, "husband and I have been planning for that some time. The invitations are late, but Mr. Berrie could not help me until to-day, and, of course, I am not well enough acquainted to get the names alone. We shall send them this week, however, and I shall enjoy the 'new leaf turning' with my neighbors exceedingly."

This information was what Mrs. Goldwaite had talked philanthropy for two full hours for, and she took her leave, feeling that she was a heroine of the first water. But Mrs. Berrie accompanied her caller to the front gate in her eagerness to talk more about the "movement." "It is to elevate the toilers, I understand," she said, "and to get in touch with our poorer neighbors?"

"Y-e-s," answered Mrs. Goldwaite, hesitating to break up her luxurious New Year's dream by bumping against the intrusive fact that washwomen and ditch diggers occupied the same planet together with the "firsts."

"Yes," she repeated, "and when we organize you will accept the presidency?" and she got up an interested look, almost as good as the genuine.

"Certainly," was the reply. "I thank you for the honor," and Mrs. John Berrie pressed the caller's hand fervently.

The delegate was not very favorably influenced with the young wife's enthusiasm over the question, and the pressure of her hand chilled, rather than thrilled, her festive heart.

But one consoling thought ran through it all: they never would "organize." It was only a subterfuge to nose out something more substantial.

Mrs. Goldwaite tripped along to the turning, where she met Mrs. Wilton, who reined in her ponies to ask breathlessly: "Did you find out?"

"To be sure; it takes me to find out," and she tossed her head in triumph. "They will have the dinner as usual. But Mrs. Berrie, not being acquainted, could not write the invitations alone; and Mr. Berrie could not help her until to-day."

"O, yes!" cried Mrs. Wilton, "that accounts for it all. Well, we are ready and will be delighted to help turn the new leaf this year, because of the sweet hostess."

"She was wonderfully elated, though, over the philanthropic work," and Mrs. Goldwaite rolled up her eyes in mock seriousness. Both ladies giggled and clapped their hands, immensely amused at the adroitness of their "feint" and its success.

The expectant "firsts" were all agog for a few days, looking for invitations; but, strange to say, not one of them received the familiar square envelope with the Berrie coat-of-arms in the corner, and things were once more fast assuming the mysterious.

But everything was made exceedingly plain, finally, by the buxom Mrs. Meigs, washer-woman for a trio of the immaculate set.

"And it's me and mine who are goin' to have a fine dinner on New Year's day!" she boasted to Mrs. Wilton on the next Monday morning, as she ran her broad hand through the steaming suds.

"Some one going to send you a nice basket?" quiered Mrs. Wilton, thinking at once of the benevolent president to be.

"Naw! yer away off!" laughed the woman of labor. "We've an invitation to the New Year's dinner at Shelly Farms; got it in a fine cover with the Berrie army coat blazed onto the corner of it."

"Why Mrs. Malinda Meigs!" exclaimed the astonished Mrs. Wilton, "you are not joking me?"

"No, ma'am, I'm not," giving the handle of the wringer an emphatic yank; "it's the Bible truth. And I was so tickled at what she writ onto the gold-aiged card, she sent me."

"What was that?" asked Mrs. Wilton, desperately, the awfulness of a philanthropic "movement" gripping her heartstrings.

"Why, she writ that 'she and her husband would turn the new leaf themselves this time and invite the worthy poor to dine with them on New Year's day.' And now," dropping her voice to one of pleasant interrogative, "where be you agoin' to dine, New Year's, ma'am?"

"I hardly know yet," answered Mrs. Wilton, truthfully; then she fled to the closet and studied the fine, new dinner dress, with conflicting thoughts.

For a young chit from college to come lording it into their midst and make such unheard of snubbing plans in her endeavor to appear peculiar, was simply outrageous! The Shelly Farms' new leaf was perfectly abominable! Something would have to be done to offset this disgusting philanthropy.

By four o'clock that afternoon Mrs. Wilton had made the rounds of the insulted elite of the countryside; and a swell dinner-party had been arranged for, at Mrs. Goldwaite's, for three solid reasons. First, to air their new toilettes; second, to soothe one another in their common grievance, and third, the Goldwaite cottage was so situated that they could easily see the coarse tide of the "seconds"—and possibly the "thirds"—flow to the farms.

Punctually at the appointed time the outraged upper current gathered at the appointed place to see the outrageous under current set toward the philanthropic president.

By three o'clock all the indigent but respectable people of the neighborhood had gone by in their Sunday best.

"Onions and sauerkraut!" drawled Mr. Wilton, as a German family passed on foot.

"Our white necktie brigade," commented another "first," as the pastor of a poor church, a mile away, and the superintendent of its Sunday school, together with a dozen scholars, went by in a double sleigh. And the "firsts" rustled their silks and smiled in aristocratic contempt.

Before the Goldwaite party broke up, however, a messenger from the Farms bowed himself into their midst and out again, leaving the hostess looking suspiciously at a message in her hand, with "the army coat blazed onto the corner," as Mrs. Meigs would have said. She glanced timidly around the expectant circle and finally drew forth a daintily perfumed note and read:

"A very happy New Year to all! It has occurred to us, dear people, that you may not have comprehended our motive in bidding our guests for the day. As we all are interested in philanthropic work, we will be understood when we say, the new leaf we turned is very timely and beautiful, and has made many hearts happy. Husband and I turned the leaf suggested by Luke, the beloved physician. We knew you were all well able to return the compliment, and so we bade those who could not recompense us.

"We extend greetings and desire that you all rejoice with us. Mr. and Mrs. John Berrie, Shelly Farms."

The "firsts" looked soberly at each other; the spirit of the note touched the good in them and the new dinner dresses were, for the time, forgotten.

"Yes," they said, "the whole neighborhood has enjoyed a Happy New Year today. Surely it is a pleasant new leaf!" But the philanthropic society has never been organized, although the prospective president is ready and waiting.

WHY did they ring the bells last night
In steeples white and tall?
Why was the earth with joy bedight?
The soft snow over all;
Was it a dream, or did I hear
A sound beneath my sill,
While winter's starlight, cold and clear,
Revealed the sleeping hill?

NAY, nay, the New Year came last night,
Another year was born:
His footprints in the fleecy white
The watchers saw this morn;
The newborn guest is at the door,
A smile upon his brow;
But he will leave us old and poor
A fleeting year from now.

HE brings to all who wait for him
A smile, a laugh, a tear;
So, fill the chalice to the brim
And drink the Glad New Year;
Let every heart be gay and light,
And vanish every sigh,
A New Year came to us last night
Adown the winter sky.

AYE, at his beck the birds will sing,
In Springtime's scented bowers,
And from beneath his feet will spring
God's sweetest, fairest flowers:
He'll tarry till the Summer weaves
Her web of many hues,
And Autumn 'mid her golden sheaves
Her happiness renews.

FOR him the songsters of the dells
Will strike their clearest strains,
And buttercups and lily bells
Will deck the wolds and plains;
His skies will wear the softest blue,
The brook that seeks the sea
Will have a song for me and you,
Beneath the stately tree.

NOR will he leave us till once more
The earth is robed in snow,
And on the ever-sounding shore
The winds of winter blow:
Then, leaning on his own good staff,
Kindhearted, old and gray,
The vintage of the year he'll quaff
And slowly pass away.

I BLESS the bells that ring him in,
With many a song and shout,
Ere long, I know, amid earth's din
They'll gladly ring him out;
But while he tarries as our guest
Let there be ringing cheer;
He'll be the friend we love the best—
The winsome, glad New Year!

HE came before the dawn of day,
A cherub with a smile,
Adown the filmy starlit way
He traveled many a mile;
And at each door all o'er the land
He knocked amid the din;
And blest be he whose kindly hand
Was first to let him in.

THE chalice fill and let him know
That love for him is strong,
Amid the softly falling snow
O greet him with a song;
From pole to pole, from sea to sea,
In accents loud and clear,
Let every heart be glad and free
To greet the good New Year.

T. C. Harbaugh.

Two Resolutions That Failed

By ELISA ARMSTRONG BENGOUGH.

"YOU were going to give your husband a lovely surprise for New Year's; do tell me how it turned out!" said the bride's friend. "Did you carry out your intention?"

"I did, and I can safely say that I will never give him another surprise as long as I live. You see, he had resolved not to lose his temper or complain about anything about the house for the entire year. I was so pleased that I wanted to do something awfully nice in return. Finally, I decided to become a model housekeeper, and, by way of showing the depth of my resolve, I decided to cook his New Year's dinner myself."

"H'm, perhaps it was as well that he did resolve to keep his temper for an entire year. Fudge and angel's food are not very filling for a hungry man."

"Fudge and angel's food—the idea! I decided on a menu of six courses, and spent ten days in looking up the recipes for it and studying them. Unfortunately, the exertion made me so tired that I became mentally upset and was apt to confuse a recipe for Italian cream with one for creamed lobster, and they are very, very different. However, when New Year's day really came and Harry said that he must spend the greater part of it at the office going over his accounts I felt that success was sure."

"By the way, haven't you a good cook? And didn't you let her help and advise you?"

"She wanted to, but I told her that she needed a holiday and must take it while I got the dinner. She then confessed that she didn't want to go out because her beau was coming to see her and would be offended if she was out. I told her that made no difference; that what you did on New Year's day you did the year round and if she did not work on that day she would doubtless be married to a millionaire and living a life of luxurious idleness within six months."

"Humph. Did she go then?"

"She did. Then I set to work, and, oh, how I did work, but somehow nothing was—well, quite like the pictures in the household magazines. The odor of things burning, too, became so strong that the man from next door—a perfect stranger—came over to see if the house was on fire and if he could be of any use."

"Well, luckily, you could air the whole place thoroughly before Harry came home."

"I did. By noon I had cooked enough to feed a regiment—dinner was to be at three—but somehow it did not seem very appetizing, so I decided to have only four courses; that was a more economical dinner for a young couple anyhow. When Harry arrived, promptly at three, I was all ready and trying to look as if I felt cool and hide the two burned and one cut finger. I had decided that three courses were enough for anybody save a glutton, by that time."

"Well, I am sure that everything was very nice."

"It—well, it was not quite perfect; I had forgotten to stuff the chickens and I had put salt in the cranberries instead of sugar, but that was mere detail, for the table looked lovely with all my best linen, embroideries, silver, glass and china on it. As I wanted to surprise him thoroughly, I did not tell him that I had cooked it myself—I meant to tell him that at the very last."

"As a sort of postscript to the dessert. How nice!"

"M'hm. Well, though he had said he was wildly hungry, he did not eat—just played with things. He kept starting to speak, too, and then shutting his mouth tight without saying a word. Something was wrong with the coffee, though I had put in twice as much as the cook book said. As he set down his cup, well, rather more forcefully than was quite necessary, he said: 'Well, dear, it is New Year's day, and I have resolved not to lose my temper for an entire year, but I must say one thing: the girl who cooked that dinner must be dismissed before to-morrow's sun is up. A woman who would give a hungry man underdone chicken, overdone potatoes and asbestos pie, would be capable of murdering us in our beds!'"

"Oh, well, you need never tell him that you cooked that dinner."

"I didn't tell him, but he undertook to discharge the cook, and she did!"

Observing the Day.

Mr. Gotrocks—What are you going to swear off the coming year?

Mr. Coupons—My taxes!—Brooklyn Eagle.

CARRIAGES ON RUNNERS.

One of the Queer Sights on the Island of Madeira Is the Awkward Mode of Conveyance.

An unfortunate episode a few days ago brought to the attention of Americans the island of Madeira, and at the same time afforded a glimpse of one of its most peculiar customs. A wealthy resident of Funchal, the chief town and seaport of the island, according to an English dispatch, was riding through its streets in a vehicle called by the Portuguese a "carro," when he was set upon, so it was reported, by a number of American sailors, says a writer in the New York Tribune. The United States training ship Hartford had anchored in the harbor, and it is charged that these members of her crew, who had gone ashore for a few hours' leave, had drunk too deeply of the wine for which Madeira is famous. H. H. Byrne was on board the United States gunboat Castine when she visited Madeira last year. From his account of what he saw there, the reason why tipsy sailors might take it into their heads to attack a "carro" is easy to explain. In all Madiera, which contains little that is American, there is nothing more grotesquely un-American than a "carro." This vehicle consists of a huge lumbering sled, sometimes with a canopy, sometimes with no protection whatever against the sun. It is drawn by a team of oxen or a pair of muscular men.

A sled in St. Petersburg or Sitka in the winter time would seem a practical proposition, but in a part of the world, which is within a few degrees of the tropics, and in the same latitude as Jerusalem or Jacksonville, Fla., one would think such a vehicle an utter absurdity. Such, however, is not the case. The people of Madeira are by no means insane, and their use of sleds over cobblestones under hot summer suns has proved itself, to their way of thinking, entirely practical.

When a foreigner gets into a "carro" he is first inclined to regard it all as a huge joke. Later he changes his mind. There are two attendants, who serve as a sort of driver and footman, only the driver goes ahead and leads the oxen, and the footman walks still further in the van and smears the cobblestones with grease to give easier sliding to the runners. As a result the streets of the city are slippery and black; and in the hot sun they are filthy indeed. As the occupant of the "carro" goes sliding along, with his nose within a few feet of a century's accumulation of grease, he is not inclined to be in a joking humor.

The people of Madeira say that wagons are impracticable because their roads are too hilly. Although the island contains 315 square miles, and is only seven miles larger than the city of New York, its highest peak is about as tall as Mount Washington. Most of the land is, accordingly, at a steep angle. It is easier to drag a sled up a greased incline, these Madeirans say, than to haul the same weight at the same angle in a wagon. Then, again, a wagon is more likely to run wild going downhill, as it cannot be steered as safely.

In addition to the "carro," the Madeirans use for transportation a hammocklike conveyance, called a "rede." In this the passenger hangs from a pole, each end of which is supported by a husky native, who are able to carry one up the steepest places, with a safety that is assured by long and constant training. The two men swing together as they walk or trot, so that the motion given the occupant of the hammock is not an unpleasant one.

GOLF FOR OLD MEN.

Some English Ideas on the Game That Has Become So Popular.

The sneer that golf is a game only for those not agile and venturesome enough for games of greater danger has long ago faded from golf criticism, and now it has actually come to pass that golf is arraigned as a game dangerous for men who may be described as "aged," says the London Globe. It is said that if a man all through his life has followed sedentary habits, allowing his muscles to become weak and flabby, particularly those muscles in the region of the heart, golf may very easily prove too severe a strain for his system. But in the pages of a golf journal this view is partially criticised by one who did not begin the game till he was very near the neighborhood of 60. He declares that it is a matter of beginning gently and he tells us that in his own case he does not find two rounds a day particularly exhausting. At the same time he confesses that he has always been an enthusiast for outdoor exercise, and is inclined to think that for a man who has never taken physical exercise—rather a rare experience—it may be a little exhausting to begin with. It is all a matter of not overdoing it at first, but, unfortunately, so attractive is the game that the oldest beginners are tempted to go in for it rather more vigorously than is wise. The result of all this latest pother seems to be that like everything else in life it is wisdom at the outset to "go slow," and this is a verdict that "aged beginners" should lay to heart.

The Case Stated.

"Did U. Miss. Me., Pa.," said the loving and convalescent wife, "when I was so ill? I had to have the M. D."

"More than tongue Kan. tell," answered the husband. "Not for the Ind. would I have it so again."

"La!" said the wife, "I hope the woman did the Wash. all right. When I get out, I'm afraid I'll look like I came out of the Ark. And all that Mass. of stuff the doctor gave me! O. you must take me to Del.'s and let me have a feast Ala. carte."

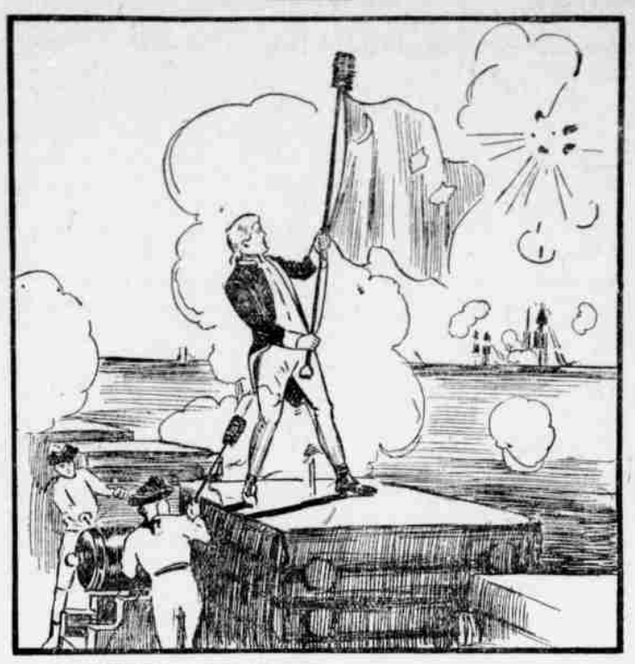
And then he sadly thought that even in the sacredness of home there are Conn. games.—Baltimore American.

An Aching Void.

"Brooks," said Rivers, "second time you've used the term 'aching void.' How can a void ache?"

"Well," said Brooks, reflectively "not to speak of a hollow tooth, don't you sometimes have the headache?"—N. Y. Press.

LESSON IN AMERICAN HISTORY IN PUZZLE



SERGEANT JASPER'S HEROISM AT FORT MOULTRE. Find Admiral Parker.

When the British evacuated Boston on March 17, 1776, it was with no intention of withdrawing from the conflict. The war was to be transferred to the south, and early in June Admiral Parker, with 2,500 troops, appeared off Charleston, South Carolina. The attack on the city began by the warships on June 28, and it was during this fight that the flag on Fort Moultre was shot away, but hardly had it fallen when Sergeant William Jasper sprang through an embrasure and, fastening the flag to a sponge-staff, replaced it on the parapet. The British were defeated and retired.

FOREIGN GOSSIP.

Wales has practically doubled its population in the last 60 years.

Quails are now said to be extinct in Ireland, where they were formerly to be found in great numbers.

A German tourist reports that on the upper Amazon river it is customary to keep large harmless snakes about the houses for the purpose of killing rats and other vermin.

The Kobe Chronicle, speaking of the imperial iron foundry in Japan, says that it has proved a failure because of the limited supply of ore in that country, and that the government hopes to secure the privilege of working the rich Hangang iron mine in China.

There are 806 trees to every square mile of territory in Germany, in the following proportions: Plum, 332; apple, 251; pear, 119; and cherry, 104. There are about three trees to every inhabitant. Many of the trees are owned by the townships, being planted along the highways, and the fruit yields a considerable revenue, thus reducing taxes.

The shortage of doctors in Russia is the subject of an article in a St. Petersburg journal, which publishes statistics of the proportion of doctors in other European countries per 100,000 inhabitants. Great Britain heads the list with 180, Switzerland has 52, Germany 30, and Russia 8. In order to bring the percentage to the same level as Great Britain, Russia will have to have 130,000 doctors. At present there are only about 17,000.

A highly colored sample of red tape is sent over from England in the news of the failure of Second Lieut. Burke, of the Fourth East Surrey regiment of militia, to pass the medical examination for appointment to the regular British army. Mr. Burke served in South Africa, and stood high on the list of successful candidates at a recent examination. In Africa he distinguished himself and proved the power of his eyes by discovering that an approaching body of men was composed of Boers and not of British. Yet when the learned doctors came to examine his eyes they reported them as bad because he could not read by electric light, in a London fog, the regulation 'three lines of letters;" and so his earned commission is not to be given to him.

HAIR AND INTELLECT.

Inferences About the Subsoil from the Top Crop—Artists and Children Prove the Rule.

Some curious statistics relating to hair have been collected by the school authorities at Lille. Thus, the auburn-haired boys are generally at the head of the recitation classes, and the blonde girls learn their lessons best, says London Truth. Auburn boys and blonde lasses come out highest as arithmaticians. But in composition they are nowhere. The dark-haired children of both sexes have the quality of imagination, and in their compositions know how not to fatigue the attention. They have movement and originality. In short, they seem, as compared to the auburns and blondes, born stylists. Now, that I think of it, Sarah Bernhardt is, or was, auburn-haired, and Mme. Bartet had light brown hair 25 years ago—so light as to be almost fair. I should not call the late Mme. Jacques Stern (Croizette) in the heydey of her charms a blonde. But she had a darkish shade of fair hair that looked like heavy sheeny floss silk, and the ruddiness that one associates with auburn. Mme. Samary was also fair without being exactly a blond.

I daresay the auburn boys and blonde lasses in the Lille elementary schools are of Flemish, that is to say phlegmatic, race. Their brains do not grow at once congested when they stand up to recite and for that reason they keep the mastery of the vocal organs. In short, they continue to know what they are about. The dark children are probably of Celtic, that is to say Gallic, origin. The blood comes with a rush to their brains, and they grow confused, splutter, and break down. If they could only be taught to remain silent for a few moments, they would be all the better for this rush, as the confusion would have passed away, leaving only stimulated mental organs. Goldsmith, who was dark, always began by being confused in conversation. O'Connell wore a black wig, but his real hair in youth was auburn. I recollect very old people who heard him plead in his prime speak of it as such. His readiness was wonderful. But perhaps he might not have recited so well what somebody else had written.

I have rarely heard a great French orator recite. Grevy, the president of the republic, was one of the few, and he reached perfection in reciting Voltaire's verses to Emilie Gambetta, in a low, sweet voice, recited sometimes passages from his favorite poets. Thiers could commit nothing to memory in the way of a poem or a speech by another orator. He had himself too much to say to incumber his mind with the writings of others. Louis Blanc shone, however, in reciting declamatory passages from Corneille and Racine, but his brother Charles—a fair, Jewish-looking man, not unlike the first Baron James de Rothschild—beat him in declamation at the ecclesiastical school where they passed their youth. Charles Blanc triumphed in both masculine and feminine parts, and drew tears from his reverend preceptor's eyes as Andromaque. Louis was best as Polyeucte or the Cid. Imagine wee Louis Blanc giving the illusion of that heroic warrior! Victor Hugo never seemed grander than in reading some noble work of his own. An old passport given to him in his twenty-seventh year speaks of him as having auburn hair, long and remarkably thick. I heard him recite the "To be or not to be," soliloquy as translated by his son Francois. Did he not throw expression into it!

To come back to stage people, the two Coquelins are fair. Mlle. Schneider, who rather recited than sang in the operattas of Offenbach, was remarkably fair. It may be that the late Queen Victoria would have read her speeches less well had she been a brunette. Rachel is an illustrious instance on the other side. I do not know whether her rival and supplanter Ristori should be classed among the dark or fair actresses. When I made her acquaintance the early color of her hair and complexion had departed. She had a fair-haired brother who suddenly became white-haired. He used to teach Italian, however, in a singing school.

Finally, on the subject of hair, I am sorry to say that the red-headed boys and girls in the Lille schools—les roux et les rousses—are at the bottom in everything save in good conduct marks. Nor are they remarkable for good health. The dark boys behave better than the auburn or the fair and are more sensitive to praise or blame.

SPOILED 2,000,000 BALLS.

Women Are Kept Busy All Winter Long Making Baseballs for the Summer's Supply.

More than 2,000,000 baseballs were used up in this country during last season, and 1,000 or more women will be kept busy all winter making 2,000,000 more for next season. A member of one of the largest sporting goods firms in this country said the other day:

"I should put 2,000,000 as a conservative number. They include all grades. Fully one half were of the cheapest kind—the retail 5-cent ball. There is not much money in that, as you can see, when these balls have to be sold 2½ cents apiece. From that low price there is a gradually ascending scale in price and quality, running through the 10, 15, 25, 50 and 75 cent lines up to $1 and $1.25, the latter being the price for the official league ball.

"This is the standard ball for use in all National and American league games and a number of minor leagues, including the intercollegiate. It, therefore, has an extensive sale. I should say that 250,000 of the more expensive balls are sold. That will convey some idea of the number of league and association games that are played all over the country. The demand for baseballs is always a steady one, and does not fluctuate to any appreciable extent."

The manufacture of baseballs does not give employment to so large a number of persons as might be supposed, says the New York Times. About 1,000 persons, mostly in New York, make the entire supply. Women take hundreds of these balls to their homes and sew them, particularly the cheaper varieties. The sewing of the more expensive league balls is a more scientific matter, and is done only by veteran baseball stitchers. New York, Philadelphia and Massachusetts are the chief places of baseball manufacture.